

SCR & SER Forest Health Update

Wisconsin DNR, Forest Health Protection Unit

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If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter, please contact Kyoko Scanlon at Kyoko.Scanlon@dnr.state.wi.us

“SCR & SER Forest Health Update” is an informal newsletter created by the Wisconsin DNR, Forest Health Protection Unit. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide foresters in the South Central Region and Southeastern Region with regional up-to-date forest health information. This newsletter will be issued monthly during the growing season and on an irregular basis during winter as topics come up.

We appreciate your comments

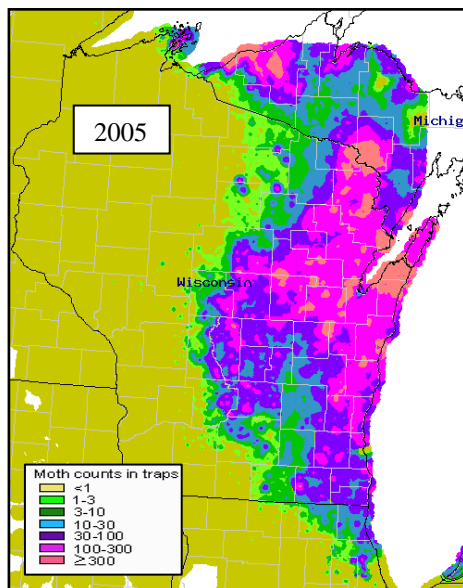
Thank you for providing us with your comments on the previous issues of this newsletter. Based on your feedback, we decided to continue to include color photos in our newsletter though we will make special efforts to keep the file size relatively small. If you need a text only version, please let us know. We also continue to welcome your comments/suggestions on this newsletter and your reports on forest health problems you observed in your area.

Gypsy moth suppression update

While gypsy moth activity was much reduced from previous years in southeast Wisconsin we are starting to see a population building trend in south central Wisconsin and central counties to the north. Warm dry summer weather allowed for good survival in the eastern part of the state. This allowed for female moths to lay large healthy egg masses. Numerous isolated infestations were observed in Dane and Columbia Counties this fall. We also are seeing wide spread low level (1 or 2 egg masses) throughout these same counties as well as Sauk and Iowa Counties. Some of the isolated infestations may experience moderate to heavy defoliation on a few individual trees next year. If spring and early summer weather is conducive for caterpillar survival 2007 may be a very busy year for gypsy moth problems.

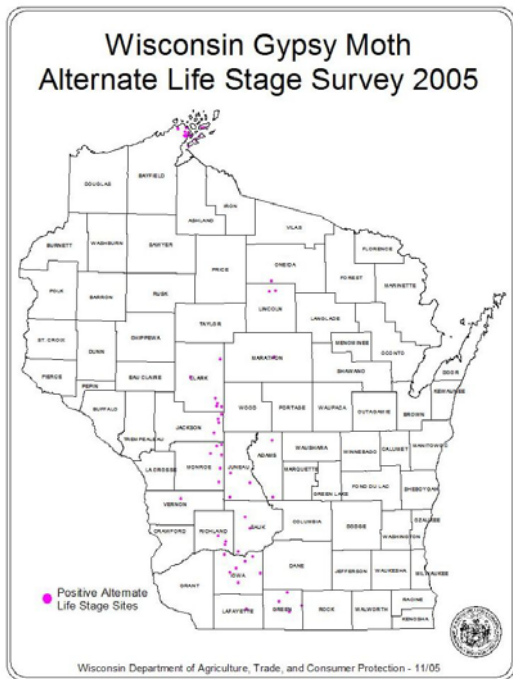
One application has been received for aerial suppression treatments for next year in the south central region. A spray block of 115 acres is being proposed for Rock County in the town and city of Beloit. In addition, a total of thirteen spray blocks are proposed for Brown, Fond du lac and Manitowoc counties for 2006. Check DNR website for map locations of spray blocks at: http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/Forestry/FH/gm/spray_areas/index.html It may be early next year before the block maps are posted for 2006.

WI DATCP trapping and STS update



Wisconsin DATCP completed the 2005 gypsy moth trapping program this fall catching approximately 316,000 male moths. Statewide the catch number was down from previous years. Last years (2004) trap catch total was approximately 373,000 moths.

Wisconsin “Slow the Spread” or “STS” program is currently finalizing potential spray blocks for 2006. Check DATCP website for map locations of spray blocks at: <http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/arm/environment/insects/gypsy-moth/index.jsp> It may be early next year before the block maps are posted for 2006.



Wisconsin DATCP also conducted alternate life stage (egg mass and pupal case) surveys in western counties. An alternate life stage find mean a breeding population is likely present. The following counties had one or more alternate life stage finds this year: Adams, Bayfield, Clark, Green, Iowa, Jackson, Juneau, Lafayette, Lincoln, Marathon, Monroe, Oneida, Richland, Sauk, and Vernon Counties. See adjacent map for general locations.

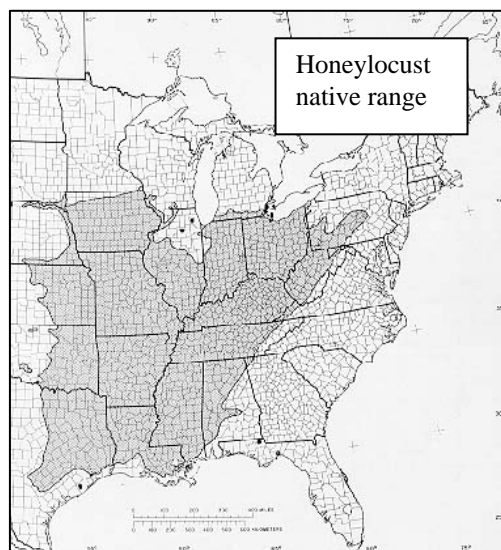
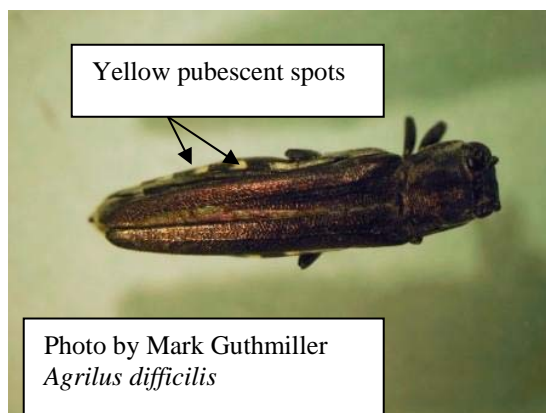
For general information on gypsy moth go to:
www.gypsymoth.wi.gov or call the 1-800-642-MOTH message line.

Gypsy moth management plan writing workshops for state property managers

Two workshops were held this fall for state property managers focused on writing a gypsy moth management plan specific for their properties. General biology and management options were presented as well as a mapping session to determine areas of susceptibility to defoliation and vulnerability to tree mortality. The purpose of the workshop was to prioritizing management options based on property goals and areas at risk. These workshops will likely be conducted on an annual basis. There is one more session scheduled this winter for February 15th in Stevens Point. If you would like to sign up for this session contact Bria Radtke at 715-831-3278.

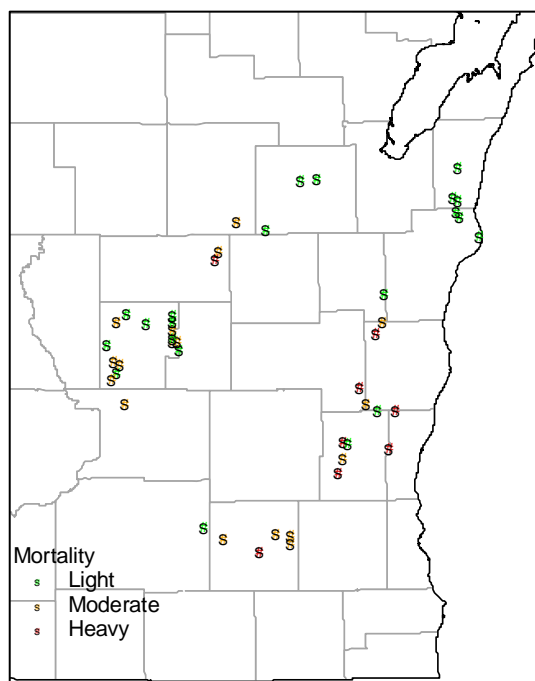
Honeylocust agrilus

Kevin Westphal, city forester for Cedarburg, reported two honeylocust trees were attacked by woodborers. A beetle sample sent in by Kevin was sent to UCLA for identification. It was confirmed to be the honeylocust agrilus, *Agrilus difficilis*. This native beetle is related to emerald ash borer but is more copper colored and has two rows of yellow pubescent spots on the side. This flatheaded borer is commonly documented in the native range of honeylocust. Others may observe stressed honeylocust being attacked by this beetle. Please report honeylocust trees suspected of being attacked by this beetle to Mark Guthmiller.



Tamarack mortality

Reports of tamarack mortality prompted an aerial survey in southern and northeastern Wisconsin. A few sites were also ground checked prior to freeze up. In general, the worst mortality was observed in Jefferson, Washington, Ozaukee, Fond du lac, and Sheboygan Counties. Areas in central Wisconsin also had isolated areas with moderate mortality.



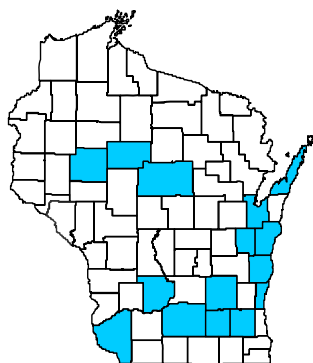
Site visits were also conducted at Cedarburg bog, Kettle Moraine State Forest Northern Unit, Pike Lake State Park, Gilbert Lake and a privately owned property in Washington County. A number of issues may be involved in the observed mortality. Extensive root rot was detected at most sites and may be due to previous years with lack of snow cover and freeze injury to roots. Larch beetle was present at a number of sites as well but not every dead tree had evidence of larch beetle at some sites. Larch beetle may be a secondary pest building on trees weakened from drought conditions and winter root injury. Additional organisms observed at some sites include a fungal species of *Leptographium* which appears to be directly associated with larch beetle, the red belted polypore, *Fomitopsis pinicola*, red ring rot, *Phellinus pini*, and an unconfirmed stem canker with extensive resin flow on tree trunks.

A detailed report of findings will be written for our annual report. If you would like a copy of this tamarack mortality report, contact Mark Guthmiller.

Wisconsin River emerald ash borer survey

A portion of the Wisconsin River between Arena and Spring Green that experiences heavy recreational use was visually surveyed in September looking for declining ash along the shoreline. No evidence of emerald ash borer was detected. A few declining and dead trees were observed and had extensive ice damage and beaver damage to the trunk of the tree.

Ash yellows



County distribution of ash yellows
As of Nov. 2005

Ash yellows is a disease caused by a phytoplasma. It is believed to cause slow growth, dieback and mortality of ash trees of all ages. It attacks a variety of ash species, including white, green, and black ash. White ash is particularly susceptible to this disease. Leaves of infected trees may be smaller in size, and light green. Vertical cracks and cankers are seen on the trunk near the base. Infected trees occasionally develop clusters of upright shoots, called a witches' broom, at the trunk. The presence of a witches' broom has been the key to confirm ash yellows in the field. In Wisconsin, ash yellows is more commonly observed in southern Wisconsin (see the map that shows county distribution of ash yellows).

This summer, ash wood and twig samples were collected from declining ash trees at 8 locations in Wisconsin to test for ash yellows through genetic analysis. The organism was detected in 7 out of 8 locations. These locations include 2 sites from Grant Co, 2 sites from Jefferson Co, and 1 site each from Sauk and Dodge Cos. (positive sites are shown as a star on the map). This was the first confirmation of ash yellows in Grant County. Some of the sampled trees that were positive for ash yellows were not showing the characteristic symptoms of ash yellows, such as a witches' broom, yellowing foliage, or deliquescent branching (loss of apically dominant growth). However, all of the sampled positive

trees exhibited branch dieback (or mortality) and epicormic branches. This result indicates that the organism may be more prevalent than previously observed. If funding is available, we may try to test more ash trees for ash yellows next summer. If you know of a site with declining ash trees or recent mortality, especially in counties where ash yellows has not been confirmed, please contact Kyoko Scanlon.

Please report to us

We appreciate reports of forest health problems in your areas. Currently, there is no regional forest health specialist in SCR or SER. Until the situation changes, please contact the following staff for regional forest health problems/questions. Thank you.

For general forest health issues

Jane Cummings-Carlson (northern part of SER) 608-275-3273

Kyoko Scanlon (southern part of SER, and SCR) 608-275-3275

For gypsy moth

Andrea Diss (Statewide issues) 608-264-9247

Mark Guthmiller (SCR/SER) 608-275-3223

Emerald ash borer hotline 1-800-462-2803

Gypsy moth hotline 1-800-642-MOTH

Forest Health web site: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/FH/>

Gypsy Moth web site: <http://www.gypsymoth.wi.gov>